

OPERATIONS UPDATE



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

UGANDA: REFUGEES FROM THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

19 May 2003

This Ops Update is intended for reporting on emergency appeals.

Appeal No. 06/2003

Launched on 20 February 2003 for CHF 353,000 for 3 months.

Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: CHF 50,000 (repaid)

Beneficiaries: 15,000

Operations Update No. 1; Period covered: March-April 2003

“At a Glance”

Appeal coverage: 77.3%

Related Appeals: 2003 Annual Appeal for Uganda (no. 01.12/2003)

Outstanding needs: CHF 80,000

The Disaster/Situation: The Uganda Red Cross Society and the Federation office in Kampala continues to coordinate humanitarian efforts with the office of the second deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Disaster Preparedness of the Government of Uganda, and with other stakeholders including the United Nations, Government and non-governmental institutions and organizations. Positive responses from the Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, and Japanese Red Cross Societies, and the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration have enabled the distribution of non-food items and for the watsan assessment to be carried out. Support is now being sought for approximately CHF 80,000 outstanding to complete the planned activities for watsan and for capacity building of the local branch office to set up an early warning system for continuous monitoring of the situation.

Operational Developments:

The inter-ethnic clashes in the neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) since December 2002 that led to an influx of refugees into neighbouring Uganda have escalated rather than lessened during the reporting period. Several districts, including Bundibugyo and Nebbi, are hosting refugee populations from DRC who fled the conflict areas. The Ugandan Government issued an appeal in May 2003 for humanitarian assistance for over 100,000 ethnic Hema who were fleeing violent clashes with the Lendu tribe in Ituri province in eastern DRC. The figure has yet to be verified, but there is no doubt that the fragile and violent situation in DRC very quickly can develop into serious internal disturbances sending thousands of refugees across the border. There have been strained relations and conflict over land issues between these tribes for a long time, which have been greatly exacerbated by the war in DRC. United Nations soldiers, who were deployed to the DRC following the withdrawal of Uganda's National Defense Force (UDF) in April 2003 after international pressure, have begun beefing up security around the important town of Bunia and the surrounding region of Ituri.

Red Cross Red Crescent action

The Federation launched an emergency appeal in February 2003 to assist 15,000 refugees in Nebbi district after a request from the Uganda Red Cross Society from (URCS) whom the Ugandan Government had sought assistance for the humanitarian needs of the refugee population. The outbreak of violence in the DRC, which spilled over to Uganda, led to a population of internally displaced families which the national society was requested to include in the beneficiary population. The UNHCR and the Government of Uganda maintained that only asylum seekers who agreed to move to designated camps would qualify for assistance. Owing to political complications and the movement of UDF troops into the area, the distribution of nonfood relief items was withheld until April when the security situation allowed Uganda Red Cross volunteers to carry out the distributions.

Uganda Red Cross activities

Relief distributions

Objective 1: To provide basic non food items to 3,000 families

- 35 volunteers from Nebbi branch were trained in relief distribution.
- A relief and watsan officer formerly working with ICRC were recruited and deployed to Kampala and Nebbi respectively to supervise and coordinate the operation.
- Verification was conducted to determine the genuine beneficiaries and distribution cards issued by the branch accordingly.
- Distribution of nonfood items took place from 14-24 April 2003.

The table below reflects distributions:

Sub-County	Households	Population	Tarpaulins	Blankets	Jerry cans	Kitchen sets	Basins	Hoes
Erussi	512	2,232	513	1,194	703	478	0	0
Paidha	446	1,756	440	942	580	352	0	0
Nebbi	246	722	244	371	351	246	0	0
Jang-Okoro	664	2,910	667	1,483	1,040	0	0	0
Zeu	313	1,232	313	720	526	0	0	0
Zeu IDPs	786	2,112	785	1,126	959	0	2,420	1,000
Kango	340	1,304	338	904	466	0	0	0
TOTAL	3,307	12,268	3,300	6,740	4,625	1,076	2,420	1,000

The Danish Red Cross contributed with donations in kind of blankets and tarpaulins, purchased via the Regional Delegation in Nairobi. Jerry cans, kitchen sets, basins and hoes were purchased in Kampala after a tender process. All nonfood items were distributed at one-time distributions.

The distributions went according to plan except that some earlier registered refugees did not show up at the designated distribution points. Reasons were the frequent movements coupled with a relatively long time lag between registration and distribution due to security reasons.

Water and sanitation

Objective 1: To improve water supply and sanitation through repair of bore holes, protection of water wells, construction of temporary latrines and hygiene/sanitation education.

Since the refugee influx, no tangible assistance had been given to the refugees or the host community, and the new arrivals increased the strain on the already stretched watsan infrastructure among the host communities. The first part of this objective explained in the appeal was to undertake a proper watsan assessment of needs and produce a plan of action.

A Uganda Red Cross watsan engineer from the South West Refugee Operation undertook the assessment and found long queues of people at the few functioning water sources, increased use of unprotected water sources, more breakdown of bore holes and increased patient admissions in health facilities, especially Nebbi hospital

and Paidha town council health centre. The recommendations made by the assessment were for improved water supply, latrine utilization and sanitation and hygiene education as outlined in the table below:

Activity description	Quantity
Spring protection: Medium springs	40
Big springs	10
Construction of water intakes	2
Printing watsan/health messages	10,000 leaflets
Construction of latrines	5
Community sanitation workshops	12

Implementation of the water & sanitation activities following the recommendations of the assessment is underway. A temporary watsan specialist has been employed to concentrate on this part of the activities.

Disaster Preparedness

Objective 1: Observation and early warning.

The communication with Nebbi branch has been extremely difficult and no functional communication link exists. Plans are underway to support the branch office with radios, fax, a generator and a computer to improved communication in recognition of its strategic importance given the volatile nature of the DRC. The officer in charge of the refugee operation has introduced weekly reports from the branch to the Disaster Preparedness department to enable it track the impact of the national society's interventions towards the refugees in terms of the food situation, shelter, health and watsan, in addition to the changing security situation.

The latest reports of several thousands of new Congolese refugees have not been confirmed, but the branch offices in Nebbi and Bundibugyo are monitoring the refugee influx closely as the present fragile political situation in DRC, coupled with increased ethnic violence between the Hemu and the Lendu peoples, can send thousands of refugees over the border in a very short time.

Coordination

The Uganda Red Cross Society and the Federation office in Kampala continues to coordinate humanitarian efforts with the office of the second deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Disaster Preparedness of the Government of Uganda, and with other stakeholders including the United Nations, Government and non-governmental institutions and organizations.

Outstanding needs

Positive responses from Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, and Japanese Red Cross Societies, and the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration have enabled the distribution of non-food items and for the watsan assessment to be carried out. Support is now being sought for approximately CHF 80,000 outstanding to complete the planned activities for watsan and for capacity building of the local branch office to set up an early warning system for continuous monitoring of the situation. The situation in the DRC which provoked the initial 15,000 refugees over the border has developed into an internal conflict zone where big refugee population movements can be expected at very short notice. We seek the outstanding amount to complete the activities planned in connection with the initial influx, but will at the same time monitor closely how the situation develops in DRC for a possible additional influx of refugees in Nebbi and Bundibugyo Districts.

For further details please contact: Martin Fisher in the Africa Department, Phone : 41 22 730 4440; Fax: 41 22 733 03 95; email: martin.fisher@ifrc.org

All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

This operation seeks to administer to the immediate requirements of the victims of this disaster. Subsequent operations to promote sustainable development or longer-term capacity building will require additional support, and these programmes are outlined on the Federation's website.

*For further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at **<http://www.ifrc.org>**.*

Uganda: Refugees from DRC						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 06/2003		PLEDGES RECEIVED				19.05.2003
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				352'793		TOTAL COVERAGE 77.3%
AMERICAN - GOVT/PRM		50'000	USD	67'975	29.04.03	
DANSIH - GOVT		3'818	USD	5'192	04.03.03	PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT
JAPANESE - RC		8'500	USD	11'560	04.03.03	
NORWEGIAN - RC		150'000	NOK	28'313	14.03.02	
SWEDISH - GOVT		500'000	SEK	79'750	24.02.03	WATER/SANITATION
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				192'790	CHF	54.6%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
DANISH - GOVT		58'745	USD	79'893	04.03.03	3000 TARPAULINS, 6000 BLANKETS
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				79'893	CHF	22.6%
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	